

do everything in our power to protect the lives of all road users, and I hope to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do that.

CONGRATULATING PROFESSOR
CHARLES CRAWFORD ON 60
YEARS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 17, 2022

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a great professor, historian and my friend, Charles W. Crawford, who was recently recognized by the University of Memphis for teaching 60 years in its History Department. Professor Crawford, whose Tennessee Land, History and Government (1984) and its 1990 update, Dynamic Tennessee, served as high school textbooks for most students across our state for decades, also has the distinction of having taught Tennessee history to future Tennessee Congressman, Senator and Vice President Al Gore in the summer before Gore's senior year at Harvard. Professor Crawford's first of 20 published books was an illustrated history of his adopted city, Yesterday's Memphis (1976) and he wrote the history of the local National Bank of Commerce on its 120th anniversary. Professor Crawford was a favorite interview for many journalists and authors and he served as a consultant on many media projects, including the 1984 documentary film "The Old Forest" and commentary on the local public television station, WQED. A native of rural north-central Arkansas, where he still has a home, Professor Crawford, 91, received a bachelor's degree from then-Harding College (now University) in Searcy, Arkansas, a master's from the University of Arkansas, and a Ph.D. from the University of Mississippi, all in history. He started teaching as a graduate assistant at Ole Miss and began as an assistant professor at then-Memphis State (now the University of Memphis) in 1962. In 1967, the university's president, Cecil C. Humphreys, asked him to start its Oral History Project, and he has subsequently conducted or overseen more than 2000 interviews, including with military veterans, experts on the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the Mississippi River flood of 1937, and a lot of politicians, and served as president of the national Oral History Association. As a professor, he has directed students in completing 38 doctoral dissertations and 68 students in the completion of M.A. theses. Among those who have benefitted from his work are local groups such as the Memphis Arts Council, Leadership Memphis, the Shelby County Historical Commission, the West Tennessee Historical Society, the Tennessee Historical Society, and the Tennessee Humanities Council. At the national level, besides the Oral History Association, he has been involved with the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Organization of American Historians. He has put in many hours as an editor or reader for university presses in Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, Kentucky, Illinois, and Georgia. He also served as a consultant to the American Red Cross when it undertook an oral history of its

beginnings. I have known Professor Crawford since the beginning of my political career and have been the beneficiary of his wisdom and friendship. I congratulate him on his long, distinguished and continuing career as an historian and wish him all the best when and if he ever retires.

HONORING K. DONALD
NICEWONDER

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 17, 2022

Mr. GRIFFITH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor K. Donald Nicewonder of Bristol, Virginia, who passed away on November 12, 2022, at the age of 84. Mr. Nicewonder was a businessman whose success in the coal business provided the resources for his philanthropy.

Mr. Nicewonder was born to John and Lena Nicewonder on November 13, 1937. He attended Emory and Henry College for two weeks before going to work at a surface coal mine owned by his older brother, J.D. After two years at his brother's companies, he began two of his own companies in Kentucky. He later sold these to McCulloch Oil Corporation and in 1974 purchased land in Buchanan County, Virginia, and McDowell County, West Virginia, with a small group of partners. In the 1980s, he sought new coal reserves and started four new surface mining companies in West Virginia with his sons, operations that produced approximately four million tons of marketable coal per year at their peak. In 2005, Mr. Nicewonder and his family sold their mining operations to Alpha Natural Resources.

His interest in coal extended to reclaiming old mining properties and reusing them for different purposes, including an airport, a portion of the King Coal Highway, and the Twisted Gun Golf Course of Wharcliff, West Virginia. He told the Golf Channel, "Being in West Virginia in mining for ten years, I thought it would be a great gesture to give the people in southern West Virginia a nice place to come play golf and let people see what can be done with some of this abandoned mine land."

Coal constituted just one part of Mr. Nicewonder's business legacy. The Nicewonder Group he launched with family and other partners controls multiple businesses. The Virginian is a golf course built near his home in 1992, later accompanied by a vineyard and a resort. The group is involved in shopping centers, office buildings, and condos in Virginia and Florida and owns clay deposits in Virginia and Vermont.

Mr. Nicewonder's business success empowered him to give generously to causes in his home region. He supported educational institutions such as Virginia Tech, the University of Virginia's College at Wise, Sullins Academy, and the Morrison School. Mr. Nicewonder and his brother J.D. have also supported health care providers in Southwest Virginia and Northeast Tennessee, contributing to the well-being of the region's people.

Mr. Nicewonder is survived by his wife of 65 years, Etta Nicewonder; two sons, Kenny Nicewonder of Bristol, Virginia, and Kevin Nicewonder and his wife, Kim Grace Nicewonder of Abingdon, Virginia; one daughter,

Kim Nicewonder Johnson of Bristol, Virginia; seven grandchildren, Reid Nicewonder of Los Angeles; California, Paulena Johnson of the Netherlands, Ross Nicewonder of Denver, Colorado, Nick Nicewonder of Asheville, North Carolina, Carly Nicewonder of Bristol, Virginia, Lexi Johnson of Alexandria, Virginia, and Steven Johnson of Bristol, Virginia; and brother, J.D. Nicewonder and his wife Loraine Nicewonder of Bristol, Virginia. I offer them my condolences on the loss of a great Bristol businessman and philanthropist.

VA INFRASTRUCTURE POWERS EXCEPTIONAL RESEARCH ACT OF 2021

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 14, 2022

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5721 the "VA Infrastructure Powers Exceptional Research Act of 2021" or "VIPER Act."

As a senior member of the House Committees on Judiciary and Homeland Security, I care deeply about our veterans.

I offer my deepest gratitude to our nation's troops and reservists, their families, and the 21.6 million veterans, including 29,126 in the 18th Congressional District of Texas that I proudly represent.

In Congress, I have sponsored many legislative proposals and co-sponsored well over 50 pieces of legislation that will positively benefit our veterans and their families.

Of all veterans, 50 percent use at least one VA benefit or service. Majority of those using health care benefits.

H.R. 5721 addresses the misguided legal reinterpretation that eliminated a 75-year long allowance of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to accept grant money through private universities.

Over the past 75 years, the VA has developed the most sophisticated and powerful research enterprises in the United States.

It is extremely important that we pass this bill because it would give critical resources and tools to better serve our nation's veterans by further improving its groundbreaking research program.

The VIPER Act would:

Ensure program continuity by authorizing the VA's Office of Research and Development; Eliminate burdensome paperwork requirements for VA scientists and administrators;

Allow VA to recruit and retain data scientists and researchers on loan from other federal agencies more efficiently;

Create opportunities for researcher at smaller universities to expand the STEM pipeline serving veterans;

Grant VA transactional authority in line with 11 other federal agencies; and

Mandate a Government Accountability Office study on the retention of VA clinician-scientists and the productivity of their research.

H.R. 5721 would benefit our veterans and the global community as VA-funded research has led to medical breakthroughs such as the first pacemaker, the first successful liver transplant, effective treatments for PTSD, and prosthetics that enhance mobility for amputees.

VA research is key to the world-class care it delivers to its nine million patients.

I hope you will join me in passing this legislation, to ensure VA researchers can be on the forefront of health research and novel discoveries.

Without H.R. 5721, thousands of veterans and civilians will be impacted.

The great state of Texas is home to over 1.4 million veterans, the most out of any state.

The debt we owe our veterans is immeasurable. Their sacrifices and those of their families are freedom's foundation.

Without the brave efforts of all the soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and Coast Guardsmen and their families, our country would not live so freely.